Amateur Radio Newsline™ Report 1378 – January 9, 2004

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1378 with a release date of Friday, January 9, 2004 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. V-K hams celebrate a new ham radio, some new Amateur Radio problems in Nepal, and Canadian hams learn that they may loose 220 to 22 MHz. All this and the latest in the war against B-P-L on Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1378 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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RESTRUCTURING: NO-CODE COMES TO VK-LAND

Major changes to ham radio in Australia were celebrated on the air on New Years Day. Q-News Graham Kemp, VK4BB, listened in and tells us what he heard:

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When 1 January 2004 arrived, so to did a new era for Amateur Radio operators around Australia. At one minute past midnight, amidst the fireworks across Australia, Amateur Radio short wave frequencies lit up, too, as they celebrated the removal of a requirement for Morse Code qualification by getting on air in unprecedented numbers.

A quick scan through the 80 meter band during the first hour of the QSO party showed that there was standing room only with stations of all license levels participating eagerly in the party with some limited and novice limited stations handling high amounts of static and nearby station noise with considerable skill .

All states and territories activated special radio stations for the event. There were plenty of Wireless Institute of Australia stations on the air to help with the bonus contacts with VK5WI, VK6WIA, VK2WI, VK4WIG, VK4WIA and VK4WIT heard during the quick scan around 80 meters.

In the act, the Wireless Institute of Australia's club station VK1WI was activated from the home of their President, Alan Hawes. Way up north long time WIA supporter John Stevens took to the airwaves from the Townsville region.

As the morning wore on the stations operating were fewer but still at a level that veteran operators say rival the heydays of HF operating when Novice licensees were first able to access the HF bands.

>From Q-News Australia, I’m Graham Kemp, VK4BB, reporting for the Amateur Radio Newsline.

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Still more changes to ham radio down-under is expected in the coming months. (Q-News)

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RESTRUCTURING: NEW BANDS AND NO-CODE TO CROATIA

Croatia has become the first country in Region 1 to benefit from the expansion of the 40 metre band agreed at the World Radio Conference in Switzerland last summer. 9A amateurs have also been given privileges at 70 and 3,400 Mhz.

New amateur radio regulations came into effect in Croatia on the 26th of December. Since then, amateurs there may operate between 7,100 and 7,200 kHz on a Secondary basis, with a maximum power of 1,000 watts PEP, in addition to the normal Region 1 allocation of 7,000 to 7,100 kHz. On 4 metres, Croatian amateurs now have 70.000 to 70.450 MHz, with a power limit of 10 watts. They also gain a new band between 3,400 and 3,410 MHz, with a maximum permitted power of 150 watts.

The Morse code requirement for an HF bands licence was also dropped with the new regulations and there are now only two licence classes there: the full licence and a beginners' licence.

I’m Jeramy Boot, G4NJH, in Nottingham England. (GB2RS)

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RADIO POLITICS: HAM RADIO IN NEPAL

Some bad news about ham radio in Nepal. Charles Harpole, K4VUD, says that his efforts, along with those of 9N1AA, to expand ham radio in that nation and to establish a memorial club station for the late Father Marshall Moran, 9N1MM, are on an indefinite hold. This, due to the disturbed social and political conditions there.

Harpole says that all radios and other gear that was donated some years ago have been distributed to the currently licensed native 9 N hams. Harpole says that the gear will come back to a club station someday. Harpole asks that everyone bear with this situation and extend understanding. (OPDX)

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SPECTRUM REALLOCATION: 220 - 222MHZ ON THE BLOCK IN CANADA

Canadian Amateurs may lose part of the 220 to 222 MHz in the 1 point 3 meter band. band. Thats the recommendation being made by the Radio Advisory Board of Canada to Industry Canada following an 18 month survey. Rick Johnson, KA9VZD, is in Antioch, Illinois, with more:

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In a move reminiscent of the situation in the United Sates back in 1991, the 220 to 222 MHz band would be transferred away from Canada’s Amateur Radio operators and given to that nations Mobile Radio service. That’s the bad part. Here’s the good news. The Radio Advisory Board of Canada has recommended that Amateur repeaters in this portion of the band be grandfathered to continue operation for a number of years. That time period would be decided by Industry Canada which is Canada’s radio and telecommunications regulator.

The Radio Advisory Board also recommended allocating 219 to 220 MHz to amateurs in Canada on a secondary, non-interfering basis. This says the R-A-B-C would put the band in agreement with a similar allocation now available to radio

amateurs in the United States.

But here is where the Radio Advisory Board of Canada begins to think outside the proverbial box. While most administrations seems to frown on the idea of hams and non-hams sharing spectrum and talking with one another in a common allocation, Canada has other ideas.

The Radio Advisory Board wants a 150 kHz wide parcel in the reallocated band be designated as “Public Service Spectrum.” A small band to be shared by Canadian Amateur Radio operators and Canadian Mobile Services for special public safety and disaster communications applications. In other words, Canadian hams could talk with their non ham counterparts -- and vice versa -- in a disaster scenario.

Radio Amateurs of Canada, as a member of the Radio Advisory Board of Canada, has opposed any changes to the 220 to 222 MHz spectrum. Unfortunately, so far with very little success.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I’m Rick Johnson, KA9VZD, reporting.

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Industry Canada must now take this advice and decide what it will do with 220 to 222 Mhz, and how soon. The full story is on the web at http://www.rac.ca/news/canada.htm (RAC)

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Break 1

>From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the W9EAR Repeater Network serving Indiana, Ohio, Illinois and Kentuckey

(5 sec pause here)

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THE BPL FIGHT: BPL INTERFERENCE PROVEN TWO-WAY

Two organizations have filed comments with the FCC that augment previously expressed worries about potential interference from and to Broadband over Power Line systems. One of them shows that service providers could loose a lot of income if anyone operates even a low power radio near a B-P-L transmission line. Amateur Radio Newsline's Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, reports:

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Picking up on the what it terms as grave concerns expressed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency over implementation of B-P-L on December 4, the nonprofit Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response Association has called on the FCC to require impartial B-P-L field testing as well as additional public comment and full and open public hearings.

The ARRL Letter says that in comments to the FCC the Disaster Preparedness organization concluded that serious interference to and disruption of critical

emergency communications systems in several licensed services throughout North America would almost certainly result from BPL implementation as currently proposed.

Endorsing earlier FEMA remarks, the group said that proposed B-P-L systems don't just pose a risk of interference. Rather, they have already been shown to actually cause harmful interference to licensed radio services.

Meanwhile, the Amateur Radio Research and Development Corporation has filed additional test data with the FCC. This, to support preliminary findings suggesting that BPL systems are susceptible to interference from even modest Amateur Radio HF signals. AMRAD said its newest data demonstrated that amateur operation in the test neighborhood would cause many homes to lose their Internet connectivity.

For its RF susceptibility experiment, AMRAD used the Potomac Electric Power Company system test site. It features a mid-1960s vintage home with unshielded interior electrical wiring and overhead power lines.

AMRAD's tests found that at a distance of just over one-half mile, data transfer ceased in the face of a signal from a mobile 100 watt transmitter on 3 point 980 MHz. When sited adjacent to the test property, AMRAD said data transfer went away in all but one instance at a transmitter power of just 4 watts operating in the proposed Broadband Over Powerline spectrum.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, in Los Angeles.

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What AMRAD has now done is to prove that interference with B-P-L will be a two way problem. More so for data providers who won't see much profit if something as simple as a 5 watt C-B radio can shut down a neighborhoods B-P-L operations. (ARRL)

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THE BPL FIGHT: TAMPA TRIBUNE PRESENTS BOTH SIDES

An excellent article that details both sides of the B-P-L controversy appeared in the January 5th edition of the Tampa Tribune. In it, reporter Will Rodgers provides not only the industry side of the issue, but the ham radio side as well. The article can be read on-line at the cyberspace address in this weeks printed Amateur Radio Newsline report. You can read the article on-line at www.tampatrib.com/Business/mgalzo1pd.html (Via e-mail)

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WITH THE FCC: CHAIRMAN POWELL PROMOTES A FREE MARKET TELECOM REVOLUTION

The chairman of the FCC is sending out a message that the migration to digital telecommunications will not falter. Michael Powell says that entrenched service providers such as telephone companies and cable television providers can either join the party or suffer the consequences.

In a December 29th interview with reporters and editors from the San Jose Mercury News, Michael Powell shared a number of personal views. At one point

he stated the current migration to digital is really a simple thesis. One that says for the past 100 years we've had one kind of communications system. That being a system that's both analog and narrow band. And while it's the greatest machine ever built by mankind, it's also extremely mature, and it's really, in Powell's view, at the end of its innovation life.

Perhaps Powell's most controversial statement came in regard to companies that are not eager to invest in the digital revolution. He said -- quote: "I have no problem if a big and venerable company no longer exists tomorrow, as long as that value is transferred somewhere else in the economy."

You can read more of what FCC Chairman Powell had to say at www.siliconvalley.com/mld/siliconvalley/7591252.htm (CGC)

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RADIO LAW: FCC STILL NOT "NAMING NAMES" IN ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

The FCC's decision to no longer identify those hams allegedly violating the Part 97 Amateur Rules continues into the new year. The agency's Daryl Duckworth, N-N-Zero-W, has the latest word:

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Duckworth: "The FCC, at least temporarilly, has revised the format in which it is supplying information on Amateur Radio enforcement actions. The new format provides only the state and city with a synopsys of the action taken, without naming any indiciduals.

Pursuant to privacy concerns, the FCC currently is reviewing its proceedures in its radio services regasrding the release of information about individuals. Following this review, the FCC will determine its privacy policy for the future. "

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As we go to air there is still no word as to when the revirew of privacy proceedures at the FCC will be completed. Its been about two months since the ban on relesing names was put in place. (FCC)

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COMMUNICATIONS LAW: NORWEGIAN COURT SAYS COPYING DVD'S NOT PIRACY

An appeals court in Oslo Norway has dealt a major blow to those trying to protect the intellectual copyright of material that they own from unauthorized duplication. This, after it upholds the acquittal of a 20-year-old Norwegian man who posted a program on the Internet for cracking DVD security codes.

Prosecutors had appealed a lower court decision after Jon Lech Johansen was acquitted last January of violating Norway's data break-in laws with his DeCSS program for DVDs. The prosecution had sought a 90-day suspended jail sentence, confiscation of computer equipment and a $2,940 fine. But the judge ruled that Johansen could freely copy DVDs he bought, adding he didn't violate the Nordic country's laws protecting intellectual property.

The case was widely seen as a test of Norway's computer protection laws. Prosecutors said they were considering appealing to the country's supreme court. In the meantime, the decision is being viewed as a major setback for anti-piracy proponents in the entertainment industry, worldwide. (Published news reports)

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RADIO HONORS: GARC HONORS MEMORY OF KU3Z

The Goddard Spaceflight Center Amateur Radio Club in Greenbelt Maryland has honored one of its own. By a unanimous vote at the clubs Christmas party, the "WA3NAN Space Shuttle Retransmission Facility" has ben renamed the "Joe Grzesik KU3Z Memorial Space Shuttle and I-S-S Retransmission Facility." This, in honor of Grzesik's outstanding support of relaying of space shuttle and International Space Station ham radio communications on the terrestrial Amateur bands for over two decades. Joe Grzesik KU3Z became a Silent Key in 2003. (N8PK vis the WA3NAN News Exchange)

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HAM RADIO HONORS: SELECTING THE TOP 5 QSL MANAGER SURVEY

John Shelton, K1XN, Editor of the Go List says that it's time again for his newsletters' annual "Top 5 QSL Manager" survey. This is is a process by which DX'ers get to choose those that they consider to be the best QSL Managers with whom they have had dealings with in the past 12 months. Its also a way to provide at least a small "thank-you" to the work performed by these and other QSL Managers around the world.

The results of this survey will be given to Carl Smith, N4AA, for inclusion in the QRZ-DX bulletin and also announced on the GO LIST Reflector by mid February. To vote, send your list of those who you are the five best 5 of 2003 by e-mail to golist@golist.net before February 1st. Again, that address is golist@golist.net. (OPDX)

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HAMFESTS: WINTERFEST IN VA. IN FEB.

Turning to the ham radio social calendar, the 28th annual Winterfest sponsored by the Vienna Wireless Society is slated for Sunday, February 29th. The gathering will take place at Northern Virginia Community College in Annandale, Virginia. And if you're ready to take the test, an Examination Team will be on hand Saturday, February 28th. More information is on the web at www.viennawireless.org (KG4OJT)

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MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES: AMSAT-NA IN FL IN FEBRUARY

And the next meeting of the Board of Directors of AMSAT-NA will take place at the Orlando Airport Clarion Hotel on Saturday, February 21 and Sunday, February 22nd. Starting at 8.30 am on Saturday, the meeting will be open to all AMSAT North America members wanting to take part.

Among the items to be discussed will be to develop the AMSAT North America Strategic Plan while considering current governing factors. AMSAT members wishing to attend and make a presentation to the Board should advise President Robin Haighton, VE3FRH by February 15th. Let him know the topic and the length of time needed to present. His e-mail is ve3frh@amsat.org (AMSAT-NA)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today’s radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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SPACE AND SCIENCE: NEW TRAVELING SPACE EXHIBIT

The largest traveling space exhibit ever has made its first stop The 12,000 square foot display will allow visitors to touch rocks from Mars and the moon, take a virtual visit to the red planet and explore the international space station.

The exhibit employs the most advanced technology available here on earth to get its message out. The exhibit will be at Seattle's Pacific Science Center through May 9th. Then, it begins its own journey on a 15 city tour over the next five years. (NASA News)

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EMERGING TECHNOLOGY: SIREN SENSOR TEST IN L.A.

On the technology front, the Los Angeles Fire Department has been asked to study the possibility of equipping engines with a device to turn traffic lights green. This, so vehicles responding to emergencies don't have to stop at intersections.   Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, is in our Los Angeles studio with more:

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Los Angeles City Councilman Tom LaBonge has asked the Fire Department to work with the City's Department of Transportation to start a pilot program using technology such as SirenSensor. This is an acoustically activated device that can differentiate emergency sirens from ambient noise and then warn the civilian driver of the approach of an emergency vehicle. It does this by shutting of a near-by car's audio system or radio and activating both audible and visual signals. The councilman believes that this technology can help police and firefighters respond to emergencies with greater speed.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, in the City of Angels.

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No word when the tests of this remote control system might begin. More about SirenSensor is on the web at http://www.findarticles.com/cf_dls/m4PRN/1998_Nov_13/53213508/p1/article.jhtml (LA News)

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NEW PRODUCTS: NEW QUICK-CHARGE NiMH BATTERIES

Turning to the latest in electronic products of interest to hams, we have this from battery maker Rayovac. That company has announced a new charger that it says is capable of fully restoring a specially designed Nickel Metal Hydride cell in only 15 minutes. Dubbed the I-C3, the new rechargeable cells and charging system uses Rayovac's In-Cell Charge Control technology that puts the control of recharging into the battery instead of the charger. The company says that doing this offers significant performance and convenience advantages over existing rechargeable and disposable battery systems. More information is on-line at www.rayovac.com (Rayovac)

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NEW PRODUCTS: INTEL IN YOUR TV

And the world's largest microchip maker will soon unveil plans to make integrated circuits for use in digital television receivers. Santa Clara, California based Intel is exploring a technology called liquid crystal on silicon which is a hybrid between the more expensive silicon microchips and liquid crystal displays. This could significantly lower the cost of flat panel high definition displays. Industry analysts say that if this technology is successful it would pose a serious threat to established consumer electronics chip makers in Europe and Japan, such as Philips and Sony Corp., as well as emerging players like Texas Instruments. (Intel)

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DX

In D-X, keep an ear open for members of a French radio club who will be on the air from Togo. This as the F6KOP Le Radio Club de Provins 77 announce that they plan to be active from Grid Square JJ06 as 5V7C from March 6th to the 12th. More information is on-line at http://5v7c.free.fr/defaulteng.htm (OPDX)

And OPDX reports that S57CQ, is now active from Bhutan as A52CQ and is expected to stay there through January 14th. Activity is expected to be on all bands as much as possible. QSL via S57DX. (OPDX)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: THAT FINAL ITEM: ARDF

Lastly, some hams have learned the secret of enjoying the hobby while staying physically fit. They're the fans of on-foot transmitter hunting, also called radio-orienteering and ARDF. Reporter Joe Moell, K0OV, has the story of a California ham who is rapidly becoming one of the best.

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I've told you about the many direction-finding medals that have been won by Jay Thompson W6JAY, Newsline's Young Ham of the Year. But you don't have to be Jay's age to be a big winner at international on-foot transmitter hunts. 61-year-old Bob Cooley KF6VSE of Pleasanton, California has just brought home a couple of gold medals from the IARU Region 3 Championships in Australia.

The competitions began November 28 near Ballarat, a historic gold mining town in northwestern Victoria province. They were hosted by the Wireless Institute of Australia and organized by the Victorian ARDF Group.

Cooley competed in M60, the Superveteran Category for men age 60 and above. On the 4.7-kilometer two-meter course, he found his required three fox transmitters in 1:30:25, seven minutes ahead of the second-place finisher. Then on the 5.6-kilometer 80-meter course, he did even better, finding all three foxes and getting to the finish line in 1:15:22.

All three IARU Regions hold championships in odd-numbered years. These events for Region 3, encompassing Asia and Oceania, drew 50 male and 9 female competitors from Australia, China, Japan, Korea, and New Zealand. KF6VSE was the only guest from North America.

A long-time competitor at non-radio type orienteering events, Bob has improved greatly since he discovered ARDF in 1999. He finished among the top ten in his age and gender category at the 2000 ARDF World Championships near Nanjing, China. This past summer, he won gold medals on both bands at the 2003 USA ARDF Championships near Cincinnati.

You can get a link to the complete results from Australia and learn more about world-class transmitter hunting on the Web at www.homingin.com. There you will also find the details on the upcoming USA ARDF Championships, which will take place in California next June. That's homingin -- one word -- homingin.com

>From southern California, where we do transmitter hunting every month of the year, this is Joe Moell K-zero-Oscar-Victor, reporting for Newsline.

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Again Joe’s website is www.homingin.com (K0OV, ARNewsline(tm))

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB and Australia's Q-News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline @arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I’m Fred Vobbe, W8HDU, saying 73 and we thank you for listening." Amateur Radio Newsline(tm)

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